

2-26-2018

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Georgia Southern University

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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Men's Basketball Preview: Eagles Start Homestand against South Alabama" (2018). *Athletics News*. 518.
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Georgia Southern University



Men's Basketball Preview: Eagles Start Homestand against South Alabama
Two GS wins this week will solidify the third seed.

Marc Gignac

Men's Basketball

Posted: 2/26/2018 3:08:00 PM

Georgia Southern (18-11, 9-7) vs. South Alabama (14-15, 7-9)

Thursday, March 1, 2018 - Hanner Fieldhouse (3,897) – 7:30 p.m.

Series: GS trails 11-4, L2

Last Meeting: 12/31/17, L 67-69 (away)

TV: [ESPN3](#)

Radio: GS Sports Network (pregame show starts a half hour before tipoff) - WMCD 107.3 FM (Statesboro), 630 AM WBMQ (Savannah), 1370 AM WLOP (Jesup)

Promotions: Let the Madness Begin! - The month of March strikes madness in basketball fans and our marketing department! Get ready for some crazy giveaways and fun promotions. Halftime - Join us as we honor our Scholar Student-Athletes.

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[Georgia Southern](#)

[Roster](#)

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[Schedule](#)

[South Alabama](#)

[Roster](#)

[Stats](#)

[Schedule](#)

Probable GS Starters:

#0 [Montae Glenn](#)

#2 [Mike Hughes](#)

#3 [Ike Smith](#)

#4 [Tookie Brown](#)

#10 [Jake Allsmiller](#)

Setting the Scene

- Georgia Southern returns home for the final two games of the regular season, starting with a contest against South Alabama Thursday. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m. on ESPN3.
- The games are part of a stretch in which GS plays five of its final seven regular-season games at home.
- It's the second of two scheduled meetings between the Eagles and Jaguars this season. South Alabama won the first contest 69-67 back on Dec. 31.
- GS is 2-3 in its last five and coming off an 81-77 win at Texas State Saturday.
- The Eagles are alone in third place in the Sun Belt standings and can clinch the third seed in the upcoming conference tournament by winning both games this week. The top-four teams receive a first-round bye in the tournament March 7-11 at Lakefront Arena in New Orleans. Seven teams, including South Alabama and Georgia Southern, are vying for the

third and fourth positions. Louisiana has clinched the regular-season title, and Georgia State has clinched the second seed.

- Georgia Southern is 20-6 in Hanner Fieldhouse in its last 26 contests there, 48-18 in four-plus years under [Mark Byington](#) and 27-9 in Sun Belt games. The Eagles are 8-3 in Hanner this season.
- Sixteen of GS's 29 games have been decided by six points or less, and the Eagles are 9-7. Eleven have been one-possession games, and the Eagles are 5-6. GS is 3-5 in games decided by two points or less.
- The remainder of Georgia Southern's games this season will be broadcast on ESPN3.
- South Alabama is 2-3 in its last five and coming off an 88-71 home loss to Louisiana Saturday. The Jaguars enter the week ninth in the league standings.
- South Alabama is 1-11 on the road and 1-6 in road Sun Belt games.
- Leading scorer Rodrick Sikes is fifth in the league in scoring (18.6 ppg), second in 3s per game (2.8), and fourth in 3-point percentage (.375). In league games only, he is second in scoring average (20.2).

The Series

- South Alabama leads the all-time series, which began in 1978, 11-4, and has won five of the last six meetings.
- The teams split the season series last year with each team winning at home.
- GS is 2-4 against South Alabama at home and won the last meeting in Hanner 84-79 in overtime Jan. 9, 2017.
- Prior to the 2014-15 season when GS joined the Sun Belt, the teams had not met since 2010 and 2011, both South Alabama victories.
- The Jaguars won four of the first five meetings from 1978-80.
- Georgia Southern swept the season series in 2014-15.

Team Storylines

- Georgia Southern ranks 21st in the nation in offensive rebounds, and [Montae Glenn](#) ranks third in the country. The Eagles are fifth in the SBC in rebounding and second in offensive rebounds, and their rebound average of 38.2 is a 3.5 rebound per game improvement from last year (34.7).
- GS is averaging 76.0 points a game, and the Eagles have scored over 80 points 10 times, over 90 four times and over 100 twice. GS ranks fourth in the SBC in scoring and third in scoring margin.
- The Eagles have been without leading scorers and first-team Preseason All-Sun Belt selections [Ike Smith](#) or [Tookie Brown](#) for six games this season.
- Georgia Southern ranks third in the SBC in fewest turnovers, second in turnover margin and fourth in turnovers forced. The Eagles have posted 10 turnovers or less in 10 contests.
- Georgia Southern's top-5 seasons in 3-pointers made and attempted have all come during [Mark Byington](#)'s tenure. GS has made 10-plus triples in a game 12 times this season.
- [Mark Byington](#) is coaching in his 170th career game today and his 159th at Georgia Southern. He is six wins shy of 100 for his career, and his 51 wins in his first three seasons at Georgia Southern were the best of any coach in the modern era. He posted a 7-4 record at College of Charleston in 2012, filling in as the interim coach for Bobby Cremins.
- Byington signed a contract extension in February that will keep him at GS through 2022.
- Under Byington, Georgia Southern is 60-14 in games when leading at half and 73-8 when leading with five minutes to go.
- GS reached double-digit wins before the new year for the first time in school history. The Eagles' 10th victory of the season was an 86-80 decision at Troy Dec. 30.
- The Eagles finished the regular season 8-7 in true road games and 10-8 away from home. The last time GS won eight true road games was in 2014-15.
- The Eagles will be wearing green shoelaces for the rest of the season to promote Mental Health Awareness.
- During the month of February, the Eagles will participate in the Coaches vs. Cancer 3-Point Challenge. The conference and its member schools encourage fans, corporate partners and media to join the excitement by joining your favorite team to help raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The winner of the Sun Belt Conference's challenge will be crowned the league's 3-Point Champion, and all participating schools are entered into the national contest for a chance to earn the national 3-Point College Champion honor.
- Entering the 2017-18 campaign, GS joined UTA and Louisiana as the only three teams to reach double digit wins in conference play in each of the last three seasons and has the third most victories (36) against league competition during that time.
- Since joining the Sun Belt in 2014, 36 Georgia Southern games against Sun Belt schools have been decided by five points or less, and the Eagles are 22-13.
- The Eagles are 30-7 in Sun Belt games when leading at halftime. GS is 35-3 when leading with five minutes to go.
- GS has a combined record of 42-23 in Sun Belt games played in January and February since joining the league in 2014-15.
- GS went 9-4 in non-conference games. The last time the Eagles won nine non-conference games was in the 2005-06 season.

Next Up

- Georgia Southern plays its home finale against defending league champion Troy Saturday. The game will tip off at 5 p.m. and air live on ESPN3 and WSAV-CW.
- **Promotions:** Senior Day – Come support our senior players in their final game at Hanner Fieldhouse. Halftime - Cheerleader seniors recognition.

Georgia Southern Athletics provides current information on all its sports through its official website, [GSEagles.com](#), which is fully responsive across all mobile devices. Information on Eagle athletics can also be found through social media channels [facebook.com/GSAthletics](#), [twitter.com/GSAthletics](#) and [Instagram.com/GSAthletics](#). To purchase tickets to Georgia Southern athletics events, visit [GSEagles.com/tickets](#).

In order to expedite entry and provide a safe environment for all patrons and participants, Georgia Southern Athletics has implemented a Clear Bag Policy for all ticketed sporting events, effective Aug. 1, 2017. Fans can find the complete policy as well as an FAQ section at [GSEagles.com/ClearBag](#).